

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards Grants for Wildlife Habitat Management

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Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Department of Fish and Game

MEDIA CONTACT

Katie Gronendyke

Phone

617-626-1129 (tel:6176261129)

Online

katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us (mailto:katie.gronendyke@state.ma.us)

BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$303,521 to municipalities and organizations across the state for projects to improve habitat for native Massachusetts wildlife. The grants are provided through the Massachusetts Department of

Fish and Game's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's (MassWildlife) Habitat Management Grant Program, and will fund 12 wildlife habitat improvement projects totaling 307 acres.

"Making smart investments in projects to restore and manage protected lands across the Commonwealth furthers our Administration's dedication to land conservation," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "With this funding, municipalities and local organizations will be able to significantly improve habitat for rare and endangered species, and enhance outdoor recreational opportunities."

In its fourth year, the Habitat Management Grant Program provides financial assistance to private and municipal landowners of conserved lands to improve and manage habitat for wildlife deemed in greatest conservation need and certain game species. The projects are also designed to complement ongoing habitat management efforts on state lands and expand opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation.

"Similar to the need for roadway and bridge maintenance, conservation science has demonstrated that habitat for common and rare wildlife and plants need active and ongoing maintenance and management," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.** "These grants will assist in those important efforts and strengthen municipal and private wildlife conservation efforts throughout the Commonwealth."

"Active habitat management is vitally important for many forms of wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians that often need less common habitats," **said Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Ron Amidon.** "These grants will enhance habitat on municipal and privately owned conservation land, and also improve recreational opportunities for sportsmen and women, birders, and other outdoor enthusiasts."

"MassWildlife is committed to both fish and wildlife habitat management for both rare and common species and to enhancing wildlife-related recreation opportunities," **said Mark Tisa, MassWildlife Director.** "The reality is that 80 percent of Massachusetts is in private ownership. Working with committed municipal and private landowners, these grants help protect everyone's investment in wildlife, habitat, and outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting or watching wildlife."

The following landowners will receive Habitat Management Grants:

- **Barnstable** – The Town of Barnstable has been awarded \$11,820 to conduct prescribed fire to improve pitch pine – oak woodland habitat at West Barnstable Conservation Area.
- **Edgartown** – The Trustees of Reservations has been awarded \$25,127 to improve sandplain grasslands on the Katama Plains.
- **Great Barrington** – The Nature Conservancy has been awarded \$39,325 to create and improve old field and shrubland habitats at the Schenob Brook Preserve.
- **Lenox** – The Berkshire Natural Resources Council will receive \$34,100 to remove the invasive hardy kiwi plant at Parson Marsh Reserve.
- **Nantucket** – The Nantucket Conservation Foundation will receive \$24,681 to manage heathlands on the Head of The Plains properties.
- **Nantucket** – The Linda Loring Foundation has been awarded \$35,200 to create and improve grassland habitats by removing non-native tree species.
- **Plainfield** – The Franklin Land Trust has been awarded \$32,228 to increase young forest cover on Guyette Farm.
- **South Lee** – South Lee Associates will receive \$12,350 to control invasive species on Housatonic River properties.
- **Sheffield** – The Sheffield Land Trust has been awarded \$17,290 to improve the Ashley Falls Woods riparian corridor by conducting invasive species removal.
- **Stockbridge** – The Laurel Hill Association has been awarded \$25,800 to treat invasive species at the Four Corners – Larrywaug Brook property.
- **West Tisbury** – The Trustees of Reservations will receive \$21,720 to improve sandplain grassland and frost bottom habitat at Long Point Refuge.
- **Yarmouth** – The Town of Yarmouth has been awarded \$23,880 to use prescribed fire to restore pitch pine – oak woodlands.

“Stewardship of natural habitats is critical for communities on Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket,” **said State Senator Julian Cyr (D-Truro)**. “These monies will help

ensure that native wildlife in our unique region of the Commonwealth is preserved for future generations.”

“Thank you to the Baker-Polito Administration for these grants to the Towns of Barnstable and Yarmouth,” **said State Representative Will Crocker (R-Barnstable)**. “I believe it is critical on Cape Cod to manage our woodland habitats for preservation, conservation, and for the enjoyment of generations to come.”

“I’m very grateful for the Baker-Polito Administration and Commissioner Amidon for their continued support of municipal needs both here on Cape Cod and beyond,” **said State Representative Timothy R. Whelan (R-Brewster)**. “These funds will help local Natural Resources staff address a clear need to restore pitch pine and oak woodlands in the Mid-Cape region.”

“Preserving wildlife habitat and open spaces is a vital to our environmental stewardship in the Commonwealth,” **said State Senator Adam G. Hinds (D- Pittsfield)**. “I am grateful these awards will sustain partnerships and projects across my District and will help residents and visitors in Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Plainfield, Sheffield and Stockbridge to enjoy these natural resources for generations to come.”

“Berkshire County is known for its accessibility to nature and the outdoors. My district is home to a great number of sportsmen, fishermen, and hikers just to name a few, and the Habitat Management Grant Program allows locals and visitors to enjoy the outdoors while helping communities promote the wellbeing of local wildlife,” **said State Representative Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox), House Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture**. “As Dean of the Berkshire delegation and House Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, I’m very grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration and Secretary Matt Beaton for recognizing the responsibility we have to protect our natural habitats by making this funding available to our towns.”

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